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Modern Philology

VOL. II.

June, 1904.

No. 1.

THE NEWLY DISCOVERED CHANÇUN DE WILLAME.

I.

THE discovery of a new epic in the *Cycle de Guillaume* could hardly fail to be received with astonishment, and, in some cases, with incredulity. It must have struck many like the discovery of a new planet in a system all of whose members were supposed long since to have been known and catalogued. It will indeed be necessary now to change the chart and to indicate upon it the presence of a strange and peculiar orb.

The circumstances connected with the discovery and publication of the *Chanson de Guillaume* are mysterious and as yet unexplained. No one, apparently, had ever heard of the existence in England or elsewhere of such a poem, nor had any catalogue, as far as I know, ever shown such a title until the sale of the library of the late Sir Henry Hope Edwardes, in May, 1901.¹ The catalogue announcing this sale seems not to have been widely circulated, and no one apparently noticed the title in question until the fortunate purchaser published the MS in June, 1903.² Even then several months appear to have passed before any scholars realized what the publication meant. In common with others I saw the announcement of the publication of such a book, but did not think that it could be a matter of any consequence until friends wrote me from Paris of the priceless

¹ Vide *Romania*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 395, 597, 598.

² *La Chançon de Willame*, printed at the Chiswick Press, in an edition limited to two hundred copies.

discovery. Finally, thanks doubtless to the generosity of the unknown owner of the MS, a copy was sent me, arriving in December last. I take this opportunity to thank publicly my unknown benefactor. The owner of the MS conceals his identity with unprecedented modesty. He deserves richly the thanks of Romance scholars the world over for so promptly and excellently printing this first edition. The volume is indeed beautifully printed, in type almost as perfect as the writing of the MS itself, and with red initial letters at the beginning of the *laissez*. Very wisely, no attempt was made to edit the text; hence we enjoy the rare privilege of possessing an exact copy of an invaluable original.

To M. Paul Meyer belongs the honor—certainly not the least in his distinguished career—of having written the first notice and analysis of the newly discovered epic.¹ In the following pages a liberal use will be made of this article of M. Meyer.

The *Chançon de Willame* is a Norman French copy of a poem belonging, as its name indicates, to the *Cycle de Guillaume*. The poem is in assonance, and numbers 3,553 lines. The MS appears to be complete,² is in an English hand, and was written, according to M. Meyer, about the middle of the thirteenth century. It has evidently remained in England ever since, probably in obscure private libraries, so that it has had no effect on the subsequent development of the legend in France, where there once existed, as we shall see, a poem of the same name, the prototype of the present song. The redaction of the poem, in the opinion of M. Meyer, goes back to the first half of the twelfth century. While this date may prove to be correct, we shall see that the epic preserves references to a stage of the legend which belongs to the eleventh century. The versification and the language of the poem, especially of the first eighteen hundred lines, are in a regrettable condition. A large number of lines have too many or too few syllables; the transition from one assonance to another

¹ *Romania*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 597-618.

² M. MEYER, loc. cit., p. 598, is of the opinion that the MS is incomplete at the end. It seems to me, on the contrary, complete. The ending, to be sure, is somewhat abrupt, but the story has all been told. The evidence, such as it is, of the *Willehalm* goes to indicate a somewhat abrupt close. One indication that the poem is drawing to an end is the recurrence, after a long interruption, of the peculiar refrain which terminates a large number of the *laissez* in the first twenty-three hundred lines (vide l. 3436 to close).

occurs not infrequently in the middle of a sentence. The existence of these irregularities and the corruption of the language indicate that the copyist was either incapable of appreciating correctness, or performed his task with criminal indifference. One of the most peculiar things in this peculiar poem is the sort of refrain which terminates many of the *laisses* in that part of the poem which precedes the entry of the hero into Orange, vs. 2326, and which occurs only with extreme rareness thereafter.¹ This refrain is much more frequent in the first thirteen hundred lines than in the succeeding one thousand. A partial explanation for the irregular and rapidly changing assonance, especially in the first eighteen hundred lines, is to be found in the condensation which this part of the poem has undergone. In the first part of the poem the *remanieurs* seem to be hurrying over the events, as if in haste to arrive at scenes of greater interest, or as if they felt ill at ease among passages whose allusions and bearings they did not grasp. This remark applies above all to the first thirteen hundred lines, where the narration is so lacking in consecutiveness and reasonableness that we are at times unable to comprehend. The geography of these lines is fantastical, and must be carefully examined before it is accepted in any important particular. The vagueness of the topography and the paucity of proper names make one inclined to believe that the originals of these passages were probably copied a number of times in England, and that they lost no small part of their individuality at each copying.²

The literary workmanship of the *Chançon de Willame* is rough, but it is the roughness of a primitive monument. The monument, to be sure, has been defaced, but one can still discern the power, simplicity, and directness of the original. Several of the scenes of the poem, even as they stand now, will rank among the celebrated passages of the Old French epic. The range of feeling shown in the *Chançon de Willame* is remarkable,³ considerably greater than that of the *Roland*, for example. Unlike

¹ This is explainable by the fact that the parts of the poem indicated do not come from the same source.

² The frequent mention of *rivage de mer* (52) may be taken to indicate that the public before whom the poem was sung had a feeling for the sea.

³ Many passages indicate a sense of humor (vide, for instance, ll. 1610-17).

the *Roland*, however, the poem does not present the defeats and victories of princes and armies which represent the fatherland itself.¹ We feel at no time in the narration that France is menaced or betrayed. Nor is the defense of Christianity made one of the leading motifs of the story. The epic is largely feudal, and our interest, in the main, is in the fortunes of a single family of heroes.

One of the most remarkable things about the new poem is the ballad quality of many passages in the first part. Several of these passages are veritable ballads. No other *chanson de geste* shows so clearly the possible relation of the ballad to epic verse. It will be well to cite one passage to illustrate this, giving the text without any effort whatever at amendment. The moment is that when Vivien sends Girart for aid to Guillaume, who is at Barcelona. Nearly all of Vivien's men have been slain; some have abandoned him. He says to Girart:²

- Amis Girard, es tu sein del cors?
Oil, dist il, et dedenz et defors.
Di dunc, Girard, coment te contentent tes armes?
- 625 Par fei, sire, bones sunt et aates,
Cum a tel home qui n'ad fait granz batailles,
Et, si bosoinz est, qui referat altres.
Di dunc, Girard, sentes tu alques ta vertu?
Et cil respunt que unques plus fort ne fu.
- 630 Di dunc, Girard, cum se content tun cheval?
Tost se laissed, et ben se tient et dreit.
Amis Girard, si io te ossasse quere
Que par la lune me alasses a Willame!
Va si me di a Willame mun uncle
- 635 Si li remembre del champ del Saraguce,
Quant il se combati al paen Alderufe.

Vivien charges Girart to recall to his uncle a number of occasions when he rendered him signal service, and to urge him, by the memory of this service, to come and aid him now in turn.³

¹ The name France appears less than a score of times.

² The corresponding scene of the *Covenant Vivien* is found in ll. 833-905, which are vastly inferior to those before us. This scene in the *Storie Nerbonesi* is found in Vol. II, p. 157; it is interesting to note that Vivien, according to this recital (vide p. 156), has recently aided Girart to mount a good horse. Cf. *Aliscans*, ed. ROLIN, ll. 190 ff., which offer a similar passage.

³ One of these injunctions is quoted by M. MEYER, loc. cit., p. 606.

The ballad quality continues throughout these lines. He closes his injunctions with a message to his brother and one to his aunt:

- Sez que dirras a Guiot, mun petit frere?
 De hui a quinze anz ne deust ceindre espee,
 680 Mais ore la ceindrat pur secure le fiz sa mere!
 Aider me vienge en estrange cuntree!
 Sez que dirras dame Guiberc, ma drue?
 Si li remembre de la grant nurreture¹
 Plus de .xv. anz qu'ele ad vers mei eue.
 685 Ore gardez pur Deu qu'ele ne seit perdue!
 Qu'ele m'enveit sun seignur en aie!
 Se le ne m'enveit le cunte, d'autre n'ai io ceu.²

The poem is almost equally remarkable for the large number of lines that express a proverb or something akin thereto: *Or est tut sage quant ad dormi assez* (l. 115, of one who has been sleeping off drunkenness); *A home mort ne devez pas mentir* (l. 595); [*Ia*] *n'est nul si grant que petit ne fust né* (l. 1464); *Cors as d'enfant et raisun as de ber* (l. 1636, repeated in ll. 1478 and 1976). There are many other lines whose expression is so apt, and whose facility of application to the affairs of life is so great, that they must have been of frequent use among those who heard the epic sung. These lines are of such happy wording that the memory refuses to give them up. Some of the lines just quoted are of this sort. Here is a humble example drawn from the latter part of the poem: A clown-like hero goes into battle armed with a bludgeon, with which he does terrible execution. He finally breaks his bludgeon, the enemy surround him, but he fights with his fists and works such havoc that the pagans cry: *Ore est il pire qu'il ne fu al tinel* (l. 13316). We read of a man who sleeps sprawled out by the hearth in the kitchen: *Tiel gist sur cuille qui ne dort si suef* (l. 2894). Of course, a homely expression like this last must have been current long before the song of William was composed, and must have penetrated into a number of poems.

The discovery of the MS preserves for us, almost in its entirety, the lost *Renoart*, which, in a much less altered form than in

¹ It is perhaps needless to say that this word does not mean food.

² This line offers an excellent example of the corruption of the text. It should read: *Se le ne m'enveit, d'autre n'ai io cure*, and the last word in the preceding line should be *aiue*.

Aliscans, constitutes the close of the *Chançon de Willame*. The *Renoart* begins with l. 2647, *De la quisine al rei issit un bachelier*, and continues, with only slight interpolations, to the end of the MS, the space of about nine hundred lines. The beginning of the *Renoart* is of course lacking, by the exigencies of its union with sources originally independent. It may be doubted whether the lost beginning counted more than two hundred lines.

The *Chançon de Willame* is an antecedent type of *Aliscans*, but it is not the archetype. It itself is the result of a number of blendings and *remaniements*, the traces of which are perfectly visible to unprejudiced eyes. Indeed, the poem offers in its present form an object-lesson in the fusion of epic fragments, and is the most valuable single monument for a study of the development of the *Cycle de Guillaume*. The poem was made by the blending of several different songs concerning the hero; it unites in one poem his salient exploits in several, and thus deserves the title so well given it in the MS: *La Chançon de Willame*, "The Song of William" *par excellence*. It is to be hoped, by the way, that no one will ever propose to call this epic *Aliscans*—a word which does not occur in the entire poem.

While we are speaking of the name of the new epic, it is interesting to note that we can now see why Wolfram von Eschenbach did not call his poem *Aliscans*. The original which he was translating evidently bore the title *La Chanson de Guillaume*, called familiarly the *Guillaume*, as we say the *Roland*. He remained faithful to the title, and called his translation the *Willehalm*.

Turning now from more general considerations, it is my purpose to set down here some brief notes resulting from my first readings of this remarkable text. The value of first impressions, even if they prove later to be somewhat erroneous, cannot be denied.

When a person familiar with the *Cycle de Guillaume* begins to read for the first time the *Willame*, his feeling is one of surprise and amazement. This feeling, if he happens to have any theories of his own concerning the cycle, gives way to consternation—to consternation so profound as to yield (if at all) only to persistent and resourceful treatment. The story is all so new!

Where are the old landmarks? We seek them in vain. For a while all the theories about *Aliscans*—if this be, indeed, the prototype of *Aliscans*—seem to come tumbling to the ground. After reading about fifteen hundred lines, however, one begins to understand: the poem is, indeed, an early form of what we call *Aliscans*—so early that it does not bear the name *Aliscans*, nor does it even mention the name; but, what is more interesting, the poem recounts twice the hero's expedition to the relief of his nephew! The two versions are there as clear as day, side by side, differing from each other sufficiently for the easy conscience of some copyist or *remanieur* to place them thus without suspecting that they were one and the same story!¹ But let us begin at the beginning of the poem.

The opening scenes of the *chanson* are the ones that make it most difficult to recognize the story. Who are this Tedbald and this Esturmi who meet us on the very first page? We finish the episode, and are still perplexed. We are puzzled, too, at an occasional note of levity in the presence of an impending disaster. As a matter of fact, the opening scenes have nothing to correspond to them in *Aliscans*, which begins at a much later point in the narration. The beginning of *Aliscans* is in fact visibly truncated; the action opens so abruptly that we do not know what has brought on the conflict. The *Willame*, on the other hand, begins farther back in the story, and offers, although in condensed form, some explanation of the events that are to follow. Its opening lines, too, unlike those of *Aliscans*, are cast in the traditional mould of the ancient epics. The more recent poem, *Aliscans*, as will appear later, takes up the story at a point not far from l. 1700 of the *Willame*, and retains little, if anything, of what precedes, beyond some of the last acts of Vivien and his death. In this light the absence of Tedbald and his nephew from the newer poem need occasion no surprise, since the part of the action in which they seem to have played a rôle has been cut off.

The expression, "in which they seem to have played a rôle," is used advisedly, for it may be that the episode in which they appear has strayed in from some other source. As a matter of

¹ The facts, as will appear later, allow another and more complex explanation of this strange duality of action.

fact the episode does not aid in any marked degree the action, save that we see that Vivien was abandoned by some who should have remained with him. His courage is perhaps heightened by comparison with their cowardice. On the whole it is more than likely that these "heroes" belong here, for several reasons. In the first place, their very presence in an episode of such length indicates that they are "original;" in the second place, the last *remanieur*, indifferent and careless as he was, appears to have omitted and—very rarely—to have transposed, but he does not seem to have cared enough about his task to introduce episodes foreign to his sources. Finally, a reference in the *Enfances Vivien* (ll. 3805 ff.) says of Estourmi that later, *en la bataille Vivien lou vaillant*, he fled, precisely as we shall see his uncle flee in the poem we are considering.¹

One of the first things in the poem which attracts our attention is the confused ideas of geography which prevail. It will be well, however, before discussing this subject, to resume in a very few sentences the events of the first part of the poem.

Deramé, at the head of a numerous army of Saracens, arrives at "Mont Gironde," and attacks Vivien, who is abandoned by Tedbalt and Estourmi. These typical cowards flee with their men. Vivien has with him Girart,² who follows the cowards long enough to inflict indignities upon them, and to possess himself of arms and steed at their expense. He then returns to aid Vivien, who, when nearly all his men are slain, sends him to Guillaume for help. Guillaume is at Barcelona, and sets out the next morning with thirty thousand men. Guiborc, also, is at Barcelona, and intrusts to him her own nephew, Guischart, charging him to bring him back alive or dead. Vivien has perished long before the arrival of his uncle, and the Saracens have loaded the booty into their ships, and are waiting for a wind to sail away.³ The nobles and leaders of the Saracens had gone to examine "Terre

¹ The *Willame*, ll. 252-402. One thing that would have favored the retention of any humorous episode, like that of these two, is the tendency of the poem toward humor. It must be admitted that a number of lines in the episode of Tedbalt and Estourmi are genuinely comic.

² Vivien calls Girart "cousin": vide ll. 459, 649; cf. l. 690.

³ This statement, which recurs, gives quite the setting of the invasions of the Northmen, and is perhaps to be considered along with the respect shown for the *meillurs homes de rivage de mer* (l. 52 and *statim*).

Certaine."¹ Guillaume attacks them, and is at first successful, but is overwhelmed by a fresh division from "Segune Tere." All of his knights are slain. Guillaume bears away with him the body of Guischart, according to his promise to Guiborc. He arrives, apparently at Barcelona, and finds Guiborc, who in his absence has gathered another army. He sets out in the morning with thirty thousand men, and is followed by Gui, the brother of Vivien, a mere lad. When they arrive at the scene of the battle, the Saracens have already carried the booty into the ships, and are waiting for a wind. Their nobles and leaders, however, have gone to see Terre Certaine, and are feasting at table when Guillaume and his followers attack them and put them to flight. Unfortunately, Deramé himself comes onto the scene with a fresh division, takes prisoner Bertram, Guielin, Guischart, Galter de Termes, and Reiner, no one of whom, unless it be Guischart, has been present thus far in the poem, and slays all the rest of the Christians, save Gui. The uncle and his diminutive nephew fight on through improbable combats, and finally wound and kill Deramé, whose horse falls to the lot of Gui. Before he dies, Deramé "regrets" his horse, just as does Aerofle in *Aliscans*. Gui is soon slightly separated from his uncle, who comes upon Vivien, expiring, but still able to speak. Vivien dies, and his uncle tries to carry away his body on his horse, but is forced to replace it upon the ground. Gui is taken prisoner. Guillaume remains entirely alone, and is attacked by Alderufe, whose leg Guillaume cuts off, just as he had done with Deramé; like him, Alderufe, lying wounded, "regrets" his horse, which his adversary has seized. Guillaume slays the horse on which he had been riding, and puts the Saracen out of his misery. He arrives at last before Orange, here mentioned by name for the second time in the series of events; the porter refuses to admit him, as does at first Guiborc also; she sends him to liberate some prisoners who are being led by and then admits him.² In her inquiries as

¹ This name occurs in the following passages of the poem: ll. 229, 1095, 1116, 1686, 1703. The same name appears in the *Roland*, l. 856, and in *Foucon*, p. 137.

² In an invaluable passage, ll. 665-75 (cited by M. MEYER, loc. cit., p. 606) Vivien bids the messenger recall to his uncle how he with Bertram came to his rescue in the battle under the walls of Orange, where he slew Tibaut. In this passage the mention of Orange is thus retrospective. The first mention of Orange in the action of the poem is in l. 2054.

to his nephews she names Vivien, Bertram, Gui, Walter, Guielin, and Reiner. No mention is made of Guischart.¹ He answers that Vivien is dead, the others prisoners.

This brief analysis of the first part of the poem, taken with that given by M. P. Meyer, will enable one to follow the argument here unfolded.

The events narrated include two redactions of the battle of the Archamp: one, which we may call A, beginning at about l. 450 and extending to about l. 1326; the other, which we may call B, beginning, roughly speaking, where A ends and extending to about l. 2420. These events correspond to those beginning in the *Covenant Vivien* at l. 832, but they carry the story farther, and tell of the death of Vivien and the flight of his uncle. In A, Guillaume departs from Barcelona with thirty thousand men; they all perish, and he flees alone,² bearing on his saddle the body of the young nephew of Guiborc; Vivien died before his arrival, and he does not even find his body.³ In B, he sets out from Barcelona⁴ with thirty thousand men, all of whom, save five, who are his nephews,⁵ perish; he flees alone, after having in vain tried to carry away the body of Vivien, whom he has found expiring.

We can best understand the relation of A and B by a comparison with the account of the events in question given in the *Storie Nerbonesi*,⁶ an account which is peculiarly valuable because it is less ancient than that of A, and yet older than that of B. According to this account, which we may for brevity call

¹ He is mentioned a little later, however, as having been taken prisoner with the others: ll. 2485, 2520, 3055, 3154.

² Line 1224 says: *Nen fuit mie Willame, ainz s'en vait*. It will not do, however, to take these words literally, for the hero tells Guiborc in the plainest language that she is the wife of a *malveis fueur*, a *malveis tresturneur* (ll. 1306, 1307). While it is probable that his flight is less animated than in *Aliscans*, since he is able to bear away the body of a boy, l. 1224 probably perverts the truth, and may show evidence of editing, *i. e.*, an effort to avoid repetition.

³ The fact that this action is almost exactly that of the *Nerbonesi* might have been mentioned by M. Meyer.

⁴ The text does not say that he starts again from Barcelona, but the context establishes the fact.

⁵ The fact that all the nephews—save, of course, always Vivien—perish in A, while they are all taken prisoner in B, would alone suffice to show which redaction of the battle is the older.

⁶ Edited by I. G. ISOLA (Bologna, 1877-87), Vol. II, pp. 145 ff., the beginning of the sixth book, evidently the point at which the record of a separate poem begins.

N, Vivien had established himself, with the aid of Guillaume and others, as master of the principal cities of Catalonia. He is menaced with an attack from the Saracens under Tibaut, Malduc Deramé, and many other princes; he sends word of the threatened invasion to Guillaume at Orange, who gathers an army and marches to Barcelona, in order to be near at hand. Vivien is at Tortosa when the Saracens land. He hastens to meet them; the battle turns against him, and, at the eleventh hour, he sends Girart to Barcelona to summon his uncle. Guillaume sets out at once, but does not reach the field of battle until long after the death of Vivien, whose body he does not even see. His men are all slain, save three nephews, Girart, Guichart, and Gui, who are taken prisoner. He flees alone, and slays in his flight Acchin¹ and his son Baudus, taking in each case the horse of his adversary. He is pursued clear to Orange, which is at once besieged by the enemy.

We find here nearly all the elements present in A, and some which are lacking. The fact that the three nephews who in A perish² are taken prisoner in itself indicates a later version of the legend—one in which the sympathies of the Christian auditors of the poem demanded a gentler solution; one, further, which allowed these heroes to subsist that they might play a rôle in later episodes and poems. If in this regard N is manifestly more recent than A, it preserves none the less an ancient sequence of events in explanation of the presence of Guillaume at Barcelona. The testimony of A offers no explanation whatever of this presence, which justly surprises us.³ The testimony of N makes all clear. The *Willame* and the *Nerbonesi* offer each other mutual support in all that pertains to the geography of the battle of Aliscans, so called, which we now see to be the battle of the Archamp, or Archant. In the light of this united testimony it is no longer possible to sneer at the information given by the latter work concerning this battle, as nearly all critics have

¹ P. 166; another form of this name is given as Archillo.

² It is true that Gui appears only in B, and that he is there taken prisoner, but, as will be shown later, he probably figured in A, and there lost his life.

³ M. P. MEYER goes so far as to say that we cannot tell from the poem whether the poet places Barcelona to the south or to the north of the Pyrenees (loc. cit., p. 606).

hitherto done.¹ What, however, is the testimony of the *Willame* as to the place of this celebrated battle? It has already been stated that the geography of the poem is lamentably weak. None the less, there can be no serious doubt; the redaction of A places the battle near Barcelona, and there is not the slightest real reason for supposing that this city is anywhere else than in Spain. M. Meyer says that we cannot tell whether the *author* places Barcelona to the north or to the south of the Pyrenees. Of what author does he speak? Can he believe for an instant that the epic, as we have it, is the final product of one man, and that we possess it just as it came from his hand? Such a theory could not be maintained for a moment, since no one worthy of the name of poet, or capable of composing the best scenes in this epic, could have left it with such crying absurdities on all sides. The poem must have passed through the hands of a number of *remanieurs* and copyists to have reached such a condition; indeed, it could not well contain so many and such grave contradictions, were it not formed by the awkward combination of different sources. It is therefore a matter of relative indifference to us whether the *remanieurs* or copyists placed in their mind Barcelona to the north or to the south of the Pyrenees. What is important is that the original author of the part of the poem which mentions this city probably knew whereof he sang and placed the city where it belongs. But, one may say, l. 962 reads of the invading Saracen commander: *Et est en France que si mal de sen orte*. Let us note, however, that this line is not to be weighed in comparison with the formal mention, twice repeated, of Barcelona, for the line is manifestly corrupt, as is indicated, not alone by its obscurity, but by the fact that three versions of it exist; l. 15 reads, *Entred que si mal des cunorted*, and l. 41, *En vostre tere est que si mal desonorted*. Furthermore, shortly after the passage mentioning France, the fact of the invasion is again stated (l. 969), where it stands: *Et est en terre qu'il met tut a exil*. The reading *France* of l. 962 would be doubtful in a poem whose geography was not askew; it can have no bearing

¹ It would be of little use to cite the critics who, from GAUTIER, *Epopées*, Vol. IV, p. 473, to A. F. REINHARD, *Die Quellen der Nerbonesi* (Altenburg, 1900), have nearly all failed to perceive the real value of the Italian compilation.

here, when it stands in plain contradiction with the most authoritative internal and external evidence.

Another point in this connection is the mention of Bourges and of Mont Gironde. The messenger who announces the invasion in the opening lines is said to find Tedbalt at Bourges, and he brings news that Deramé has landed at Mont Gironde.¹ The mention of Bourges here is probably due to the name Tedbald de Burges, which occurs two lines previously (l. 21). Not only does l. 23 have a lame appearance, as will be evident on reading the passage, but it occurs in that part of the poem which contains the greatest absurdities, both of action and geography. In fact, the mere narration of the events shows sufficiently their absurdity: A messenger announces at Bourges that the Saracens have landed at Mont Gironde, which, in the *Geste de Guillaume*, probably indicates Gironde, the modern Gerona, in Catalonia, called Gironde in the French epics, the supposed seat of Guillaume's epic brother Ernaut,² and that they are in the "Archamp." Tedbalt passes the night where he is, supposedly at Bourges, and in the morning he beholds the earth covered with the enemy. None the less, he slips out of the city, accompanied by ten thousand men, and marches to the "Archamp" to find the Saracens! The only other evidence we have to indicate where the "Archamp" is, lies in the fact that Vivien, his men reduced to one hundred (l. 556), and then to twenty (ll. 568, 575, 743, 746), sends Girart to his uncle at Barcelona. The distance does not seem to be great, although much dependence cannot of course be placed on the indications of time and distance as given.³ Girart, we are told, had to fight his way for five "leagues," when his horse gave out. He went on on foot, and found the country alarmed for fifteen "leagues" farther; he hastens on, running all

¹ For these passages vide *Romania*, Vol. XXXII, p. 602.

² M. MEYER, who seems unwilling to admit that the battle took place in Spain, refers Mont Gironde to the Gironde, and takes with seriousness the mention of Bourges; loc. cit., pp. 602, 603. The poem mentions Hernald de Girunde in l. 2551, and also applies to the locality in Catalonia the words: *as prez de Girunde* (375), cf. 635, also *Aymeri de Narbonne*, 4545-4571. These facts, taken with the proximity of the city of Gironde to Barcelona and the evident field of military activity, exclude the possibility of "Mont Gironde" indicating the river.

³ Such passages as ll. 749, 750 indicate in Vivien a hope, which we must think reasonable, that the aid sent for will arrive.

day long (ll. 736, 737). The journey seems much of it to be along the shore of the sea (ll. 710-12); the "Archamp" itself is evidently by the salt sea (ll. 839-66). The army of relief starts from Barcelona at nightfall, rides all night, and arrives at the "Archamp" in the morning (ll. 1082-89). If the indications of the poem could be relied on, the battlefield would certainly not be far from Barcelona, rather than near Bourges. We need, however, only to look at the matter in another light to feel that the "Archamp" must be in Catalonia, not far from Barcelona. What was Guillaume doing at this city, unless, as recounted in N, to be near at hand in case of an attack on Vivien? No other motive is visible, and this one fits so perfectly all the facts that we are obliged to accept it. Another point: Where had he come from in betaking himself to Barcelona? From Orange, doubtless. If, then, he went from Orange to Barcelona to be ready to relieve Vivien who was near Bourges or the Gironde, it must be admitted that he adopted a novel way of doing so. The only reasonable supposition is that Vivien was near Barcelona.

But, after all, what evidence is there that Guillaume set out from Barcelona to relieve Vivien? One may say, *a priori*, that, Spain being the scene of the exploits of Vivien in general, it is likely that the culminating scene of his death is there also. We know, for instance, that the *Covenant Vivien*¹ and the *Enfances Vivien*² place his exploits in Spain. The only sources which state that Guillaume marched from Barcelona to the field of battle where Vivien died are the *Willame*, N, and *Foucon*. This last poem says of Guillaume on this occasion: *De Barzelone quand il issit*.³ The evidence was deemed sufficiently strong before the discovery of the *Willame*; since then, it is overwhelming.⁴

It being granted that the army went from Barcelona to the battlefield of the Archamp, is there any further evidence to enable

¹ Vide l. 62: *Il sont entré en Espagne la grant*.

² Vide *statim*. Mention is made in two excellent MSS of Galice, which is the scene of some of the hero's exploits in N: vide MS 1449, l. 3375; MS 1448, l. 3384. The MS in prose, ll. 2046 ff., shows also that the city which Vivien has taken is in Spain, near the road of St.-Jacques-de-Compostelle. This city is said to be in Galicia in the text F of the life of St. Vidian: *St. Vidian de Martres-Tolosanes*, p. 52, *Bulletin de lit. ecclésiastique*, published by the Institut Catholique de Toulouse, No. 2, février 1902. ³ Edition of TARBÉ, pp. 6, 7.

⁴ Vide *The Origin of the Covenant Vivien*, in "The University of Missouri Studies," Vol. I, No. 2, 1902, pp. 37, 40, 50, 51; also *Romania*, Vol. XXX, p. 197.

us to locate this spot? According to N, Vivien was at Tortosa when the invasion was announced, and he there awaited the enemy.¹ Guillaume came to Barcelona with a newly gathered army, lest the enemy should retake this city. It is here that he is summoned, just as in the *Willame*, by Girart, and from here that he sets out for the fatal field. It may be observed, in passing, that the distance as indicated by the *Willame* squares very well with the geography of N. But N is not the only source which gives the neighborhood of Tortosa as the site of this celebrated struggle. In *Foucon*, p. 83, Tibaut, in reciting the conflicts he has had with the family of Guillaume, says that it is true that they took away from him—presumably without great loss—Balesguer, Barcelona, Porpaillart, and “Gloriette,” but that he made them pay dearly for Tortelouse, where he slew Vivien.² Tortelouse is a frequently found form of Tortose. It seems clear that the battle of the Archamp, which has generally been called the battle of Aliscans, took place in Catalonia, not far from Tortosa.

What are we to say, however, about the evidence of *Aliscans*, and of the *Covenant*, according to which Guillaume goes from Orange to the field of battle, which appears to be quite near?

The newly discovered *chanson* allows us to answer this question authoritatively. If the *Willame* began at the same point in the action as *Aliscans*, it would contain no mention of Barcelona. Indeed, what distinguishes these two epics is the sloughing off of the first branch of the *Willame*—the more ancient branch, the one which alone preserved to some extent the original action. Nor does it require a seer to divine that the expeditions of Guillaume from Barcelona were destined to disappear from the *Willame*, provided that the epic continued to be sung, for the presence of the hero at Barcelona is entirely unmotivated. The stages in the development of the *Chançon de Willame*, or of its original, in the march toward *Aliscans*, were probably as follows: First stage:³ Guillaume was at Orange, where he learned of an invasion of

¹ Vol. II, pp. 145 ff.

² Another mention of this is found on p. 86 of the same poem.

³ It may be that the original scene of Guillaume's exploits was Catalonia, a supposition whose possibility has never been suggested. The accepted theories of the critics all place his original seat at Orange, and treat his exploits in Spain as relatively modern. If the original scene of his exploits was in Spain, the first stage of the legend contained of course no mention of Orange.

the lands of Vivien, in the Archamp. He gathers an army, betakes himself to Barcelona, and is summoned from there to the field of battle. He arrives after the death of Vivien, loses all his men, and flees alone to Barcelona. Second stage: Guillaume is at Barcelona—we are not told why—whence he is summoned by Vivien, who is in mortal danger in the Archamp. He hastens to the rescue, but arrives too late, his nephew being already dead. He loses all his men, and flees alone to Barcelona. Third stage: Guillaume's presence at Barcelona, being unmotivated, is left out. He is summoned from Orange, marches to the Archamp in the same time as in the other versions from Barcelona, finds Vivien dying, ministers to his wants, loses all his men, save his other nephews, who, instead of perishing as in previous versions, are taken prisoner, and flees alone to Orange. Fourth stage: virtually the same as the preceding, save that, the name "Archamp" not being understood, the *remanieurs* begin to use concurrently with it the name "Aliscans," which came about in this way: The field of this terrible battle, being now evidently near Orange, could only be the site of the celebrated cemetery at Arles, called Aliscamps, where countless ancient tombs were to be seen—tombs which the people venerated as those of martyrs who had many of them fallen in defense of the cross.¹ There has thus been a steady trend of the action from Spain toward Orange, the cyclic seat of Guillaume.

Of the versions of the battle extant, N preserves the ancient geography best and clearest, although it is posterior to A in a number of points, such as the taking prisoner of the nephews. The version of *Foucon*, as far as it goes, is of the second stage. The redaction A belongs to the second stage; B, in part to the third stage; the *Covenant*, *Aliscans*, and the *Willehalm*, to the fourth. In the last-mentioned poem Vivien accompanies Guillaume from Orange to the scene of the battle,² and Wulfram speaks of the tombs that strew the battlefield.³

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¹ The testimony of the *Chronicle* of TURPIN concerning the cemetery at Arles is well known, as is the passage from PHILIPPE MOUSKET, ll. 8970-72. A similar passage is found in the *Codex de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle*, edited by FITA and VINSON (Paris, 1882), p. 21.

² Vide 13, 21.

³ Vide ll. 386, 6 ff.; 259, 5 ff.; 394, 20 ff.; 437, 20 ff., 259, 6 ff.